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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

WJ - Mr. Coerr

(27)

DATE: October 10, 1961

SUBJECT: Interview-President Kennedy and Chilean  
Foreign Minister Carlos Martinez Sotomayor

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Mr. Wymberley DeR. Coerr,  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
of State for Inter-American  
Affairs  
Mr. F. van Reigersberg,  
LS interpreter

Sr. Carlos Martinez  
Foreign Minister  
Ambassador Walter Muller

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1. Recent Political Changes in Chile

The Foreign Minister explained to the President the significance of the entrance of the Radical Party into President Alessandri's Administration. Together with the Conservatives and Liberals, the Administration now has more than 60% of Congress behind it. The Radical Party is of the "democratic left" and has tenets very close to those of President Kennedy. The Alessandri Administration fully endorses the Alliance for Progress, and new Radical support means added support for the Alliance.

2. Alliance for Progress

The President said the US is prepared to give important help to Latin America during the next ten years, towards economic and social development. But it will be necessary to show the Alliance is a joint effort, with sacrifices from both sides, if the Congress and the American people are to support the Alliance.

The Foreign Minister described the new Chilean Ten-Year Development Plan, and told how it coincides with the President's ideas. Commissions comprised of Congressional representatives of the three Administration parties are currently studying planned legislation in agrarian reform, tax reform, customs revision, and administrative reorganization.

Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Country Series.  
Chile, October - December 1961.

3. Economic

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3. Economic Development

Under the Chilean Ten-Year Plan, per capita income would increase 25% in the decade. The Foreign Minister hopes this can be increased, as the people expect rapid social and economic progress and their patience is running short. He thanked the President for the favorable position taken by the US regarding a possible IBRD-sponsored consortium, which would aid the GOC in the Ten-Year Plan.

4. Land Reform in Chile

The Foreign Minister explained the program would be in stages, beginning with the GOC dividing public lands for distribution to the peasants. Second, the government would expropriate private lands which were not being utilized to the optimum. However, division of large estates must not lead to small, uneconomic holdings. Agricultural villages will be built complete with schools and credit institutions. Agrarian reform must be for the purpose of implementing social change, as well as improving the economic situation.

5. Cuba

According to the Foreign Minister, the US-sponsored invasion attempt had been a serious mistake, lowering US prestige. Opposition in Cuba to Castro seems to be increasing, for both political and economic reasons. More and more internal troubles will weaken Castro and eventually bring his downfall. It would be a serious error to take collective measures through the OAS.

The President asked the Minister's opinion on whether measures similar to those taken at San José against the Dominican Republic could be taken by the CAS if executions in Cuba continue.

The Foreign Minister believes the two situations are different. Nevertheless, if executions were to continue, consultations might be held very privately at the Foreign Minister level to determine if sanctions would be appropriate and, if so, their extent.

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